# Security Council

Sixtieth year

*Provisional*

**5282**nd meeting
Monday, 17 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

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| *President*: | Mr. Ungureanu | (Romania) |
| *Members*: | Algeria | Mr. Baali |
| | Argentina | Mr. García Moritán |
| | Benin | Mr. Djakpo |
| | Brazil | Mr. Sardenberg |
| | China | Mr. Wang Guangya |
| | Denmark | Ms. Løj |
| | France | Mr. De La Sablière |
| | Greece | Mr. Vassilakis |
| | Japan | Mr. Oshima |
| | Philippines | Mr. Baja |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Denisov |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Emyr Jones Parry |
| | United Republic of Tanzania | Mr. Mahiga |
| | United States of America | Mr. Brencick |

## Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2005/638)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-55536 (E)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security**

**Letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2005/638)**

**The President**: As agreed in prior consultations, the Security Council is pleased to invite the following representatives of regional organizations to participate in this meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure: His Excellency Professor Omotayo R. Olanyan, Acting Executive Secretary and representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission; His Excellency Mr. Hamidon Ali, Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; His Excellency Mr. Valery Kyrychenko, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States; His Excellency Mr. Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; His Excellency Mr. Yahia A. Mahmassani, representative of the Secretary General of the League of Arab States; His Excellency Mr. Martin Erdmann, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy Division of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; His Excellency Mr. Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States; and His Excellency Mr. Mark Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to all the aforementioned representatives to this meeting. I also thank them for taking the time to be with us today.

In view of the limited seating at the Council table, the first five speakers of regional organizations are seated at the table. Upon the conclusion of their statements, the Secretariat will invite the remaining representatives of regional organizations to be seated at the table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to document S/2005/638, which contains the text of a letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a background paper on the item under consideration.

It is my particular pleasure to acknowledge the presence of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who, as we all know, attaches great importance to the subject of today's debate.

Allow me to begin the debate by making a statement in my national capacity.

I would like to state at the outset that, as an acceding country, Romania aligns itself with the statement to be made later by Ambassador Jones Parry on behalf of the European Union (EU).

I recognize with appreciation the presence of the Secretary-General, as well as his steadfast overall interest in the issue that we are addressing today. I also wish to express my particular gratitude to the leaders and representatives of regional organizations who took the time to come to New York to participate in our proceedings. I am also very pleased to acknowledge the presence in the public gallery of a group of students from Columbia University, a fine team of both Romanians and Americans.

There are 3 main reasons why Romania has taken up the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security as the flag theme of its current tenure in the Security Council. The first has to do with Romania's own record of making the regional dimension a hallmark of its long-standing foreign policy and action, as well as with its experience in contributing to conflict management in our region. Working in partnership with the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, the OSCE and the Council of Europe have developed durable solutions to put an end to conflict in the Balkans. That partnership allowed for integrated solutions that addressed security issues while supporting the building of democracy and opening up the path to meaningful regional integration. If such integrated conflict management were to be

practiced in other areas of our continent where disputes and tensions continue to exist, Europe as a whole could become free of conflict in a sustainable manner, thereby finally ending insecurity and making it impossible to relapse into violence.

Romania was a key player in such undertakings as Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, in 2001, and as Chair of the South-East European Cooperation Process, from 2004 to 2005. Next month, my country will once again be at the forefront of regional efforts when we assume the chairmanships of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers and of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. In the meantime, Romania has become a North Atlantic ally and acceding country to the EU. Each of those organizations is now also making contributions to restoring or consolidating peace well beyond the territorial realm of their respective memberships, be that in Afghanistan or Iraq or in the Sudan and its Darfur region.

In Romania's own neighbourhood, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations continues to be of the utmost importance to the process regarding Kosovo. The same is true for the still unresolved and protracted conflicts in the Black Sea area. Among those, the issue of the Abkhaz region of Georgia is on the agenda of the Security Council, and will be taken up again towards the end of our presidency.

In the same context, a recent example of joint undertakings by regional organizations is the launch of the EU mission for the monitoring of the border between the Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, which we trust will have a positive impact on the settling of the conflict in the Transdnister region of the latter.

A second reason for our steady pursuit of the regional theme relates to the important developments that have taken place recently within the United Nations in that regard. The Secretary-General himself deserves praise and credit for having presided this year over the sixth, and arguably the most successful thus far, meeting with the heads of regional organizations having a partnership with the world Organization. The outcome of that meeting should lend itself to sustained follow-up, especially since world leaders gathered in New York last month resolved to expand consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations through formalized agreements between their respective secretariats and, as appropriate, to involve regional organizations in the work of the Security Council.

From a historical perspective, we have to acknowledge the tremendous foresight and vision the Charter's authors had in laying down a sophisticated Chapter VIII that stands the test of time despite the fact that it was crafted at a time when regionalism was anything but the driving force it certainly represents today. However, something must have changed in that regard in the six decades that have elapsed. We now have to determine how to make the most of Chapter VIII, and enhance global, regional and subregional national synergies in the areas of conflict prevention and management, as well as in upholding human rights, democracy and development.

Our third reason has to do precisely with the underlying conviction that creating the right complementarity and subsidiarity between the United Nations and regional action would significantly consolidate both and generate a considerable pool of resources assigned to peace that would ultimately lead to the ability of the international community to effectively and promptly address every tension, every threat, every open conflict and every fragile situation in the aftermath of conflict. We need to remain flexible, open and creative when expanding on the potential of global-regional cooperation.

Contributions that regional organizations can bring span a wide range of options, as I am sure today's debate with our valued partners and guests will reconfirm. Our work on cooperation with regional organizations should therefore be aimed not at identifying universal patterns, but rather at ascertaining, at the end of the day, which regional actors can be relied on in a given situation, what they can be expected to bring to the table of conflict-resolution, and how the United Nations and other regional partners can help fill in the gaps.

That approach is precisely what is upholding the draft resolution before the Council today. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all delegations that have contributed to making its contents as substantial as they currently stand, and I wish to express appreciation for the interest that regional organizations represented today have taken in the whole process.

The draft resolution provides an initial framework to make the expanded regional involvement envisaged in the outcome document work. It aims at regular meetings with heads of regional and subregional organizations and better communication with those partners. It calls upon all States to contribute to strengthening the capacities of regional and subregional organizations. It invites the Secretary-General to report on the dynamics, challenges and opportunities of a more meaningful interplay between global and regional actions in the area of peace and security.

I am persuaded that the two regional debates Romania has convened during its current term in the Council and the adoption of the draft resolution will only open up the way for the process to be carried on. Already, other elected members have manifested their readiness in that direction. At some point in time, a wider group of friends of the Council's cooperation with regional organizations could be set up. Romania would certainly look forward to participating in such an undertaking.

In fact, with practically every meeting it holds, the Security Council invariably comes across regional implications of conflicts. United Nations action is also buttressed by regional contributions in the new areas of global anti-terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

I trust that the advances in the regional outreach of the Security Council will in turn lead the way to a global United Nations-regional organizations partnership that will be broader in scope than what is currently possible under Chapter VIII. I trust that we will eventually have the sort of Charter that will be devoted only to the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, for that is what will make our Organization not only live on, but deliver better on the high expectations placed on it. And that will be the lasting contribution my country, Romania, will have been able to make as a responsible elected member of the Security Council in the years 2004 and 2005.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

Once again, I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and invite him to take the floor.

**The Secretary-General**: At last month's summit, world leaders supported a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter. We need only look at the reality of contemporary peace operations to see why.

Over the last decade, there has been a dramatic growth in the range of partnerships between regional organizations and the United Nations in support of countries emerging from conflict. In peacekeeping, those partnerships have taken many different forms.

There have been transitions from regional operations to United Nations operations — as we saw in Liberia with the Economic Community of West African States — and from United Nations operations to regional ones, as we saw in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the European Union (EU).

The United Nations and regional partners have coordinated separate missions side by side, as with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Afghanistan and Kosovo. In Kosovo, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the EU were also included as part of the structures of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

Regional organizations have provided support within the context of a United Nations-led mission, as with the Organization of American States engagement in Haiti.

Regional operations have provided bridging support until United Nations peacekeepers received reinforcement, as we saw with the EU operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003.

And finally, as in Darfur recently, the United Nations has provided support to a regional operation, in that case deployed by the African Union (AU).

The same trends are evident in our peacemaking operations and efforts. On important occasions, the United Nations has provided critical support to regional processes, as in Sudan, where the United Nations assisted the effort, led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, that secured the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and is now supporting the AU-led efforts on Darfur. On other occasions, regional organizations have provided vital political and technical support to United Nations efforts, as we saw with the wide-ranging EU support

for the recent United Nations peacemaking effort in Cyprus.

In short, we are increasingly drawing on the resources and legitimacy of a network of multilateral mechanisms — regional and global — to provide collective responses to the peace and security challenges of today.

That is why the Security Council has stressed the need to increase collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations and has established the practice of meeting with them annually. To support those efforts, the high-level meetings between the United Nations Secretariat and regional organizations have now also been made an annual event, and a Standing Committee has been set up to maintain strategic direction and offer broad guidance on action at the working level. The world summit gave new backing to those efforts.

The task now and the task ahead of us is to make sure that our cooperation mechanisms work as well as possible. They must be effective, efficient and mutually reinforcing. They must be flexible and responsive to our rapidly changing and integrating world, and they must be consistent with the Charter and advance its principles and purposes. I hope we can make progress in four broad areas.

The first is the need to strengthen capacity. The demands for peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are high and seem likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Increased regional activity, within the framework of the Security Council's primary responsibility for international peace and security, will be an important component of improved international responses to conflict.

This is particularly true in Africa. We in the Secretariat see our partnership with the African Union in peacekeeping as a strategic priority, and I welcome the commitment made at the world summit to support a 10-year programme to strengthen the capacity of the African Union. We now look forward to an open and productive dialogue with the African Union and other regional partners on how to implement this programme.

Second, we should exploit our comparative strengths. Each of us may have particular capacities in responding swiftly or robustly, or in undertaking activities that are resource intensive or require long-term engagement. Let us make sure that we complement each other, rather than compete with each other. I hope that, through regular dialogue on our specialized competencies, we will gain a clear picture of who can bring what to the table. We should reflect our understandings in formalized agreements, as envisaged in the summit outcome document. Some of these could be signed even at the operational level of our respective organizations in order to move forward pragmatically and maximize results.

Third, we should deal with conflict in a holistic manner. We must focus not just on peacekeeping and peacebuilding but also on conflict prevention and resolution. The United Nations is looking to strengthen its mediation capacities as envisaged in the summit outcome document. And the stronger our capacity is, the more we can assist non-United Nations mediators, particularly partners in regional organizations. We must also focus on the broader social and economic components of peace, using the new Peacebuilding Commission to draw together the contributions of many actors, including regional organizations, in support of common peacebuilding strategies.

Fourth, and most important, we should reinforce a collective approach to security. The United Nations partnerships with regional organizations must provide the means to meet, rather than to avoid, our responsibilities under the Charter to provide an effective international response to violent conflict wherever it occurs.

At times, a regional response may be the best way to end conflict or build peace. But on other occasions, the direct involvement of the United Nations, either alone or with regional partners, may be vital. When it is, the Organization must be willing and able to act. In that spirit, I warmly welcome the world summit's recommendation that regional organizations consider placing their conflict prevention and peacekeeping capacities within the framework of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

Likewise, the best-equipped troop contributors should remain ready to deploy where needed around the world, either through, or in support of, regional organizations or directly through United Nations peacekeeping. That would be a tangible demonstration of our collective commitment to partnership.

May I conclude by thanking the Government of Romania for the strong interest it has shown on this

issue during its tenure on the Council. I hope that the torch of leadership will pass to another Council member, so that we build on the momentum that has been generated in promoting cooperation with regional organizations in service of the peoples of the United Nations.

**The President**: I thank the Secretary-General for his kind words.

I now invite the Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to take the floor, Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut.

**Mr. de Brichambaut** (*spoke in French*): This summer, the United Nations celebrated its sixtieth anniversary and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the Helsinki Act 1975. The world summit and the resulting outcome document have indicated the road to follow for the future with regard to relations between the United Nations and regional organizations.

With 55 participating States spread over three continents, the OSCE is prepared to contribute actively to this work on the basis of the important achievements we have made with regard to norms and commitments shared by all of the participating States.

Jointly with the current presidency of OSCE — held by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Mr. Dimitrij Rupel — I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for this very timely meeting. I shall try to answer three questions that you have raised.

Along with the other regional organizations, the OSCE is in a position to provide strong assistance to the Security Council in its central role in preserving international peace and security. The OSCE has the Forum for Security Cooperation, which is the keeper of disarmament treaties and confidence-building measures. It has the Conflict Prevention Centre and has deployed 18 missions in the field, which in agreement with the host countries are trying to create long-term stability. In this connection, it carries out broad security responsibilities in its sphere of responsibility, which could be considered to be subsidiary to those of the Security Council. Sometimes OSCE activities are directly set out in the Council's resolutions; this is the case in Kosovo and Georgia. Its actions are carried out essentially after a crisis in the work of consolidation and stabilization, but they also follow closely so-called frozen conflicts, and the texts governing them do not exclude OSCE participation in peacekeeping operations.

This practice and the instruments entrusted to the Permanent Council under the responsibility of the current presidency are available to the Security Council, if the latter wishes to make use of them. Through the transmission of data, evaluations and analyses and by meeting requests, the OSCE and its members can provide information to the Security Council in the spirit of Article 52 of the Charter. Guidance from the Council will be very much appreciated. It can, of course, apply to one or another of the crisis cycle phases in which the OECD is able to intervene.

Similarly, the OSCE has the goal of assisting in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, for example in the area of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Contacts with the Secretariat would be facilitated if we had a framework agreement between the United Nations and the OSCE, as just mentioned by the Secretary-General. We would be prepared to have a permanent liaison office in New York. Work is constantly carried out by the State holding the OSCE presidency.

Among the regional organizations, there is a network of exchanges. It will be strengthened, and I think it is relevant for the work of this Council. Within each region, there is mutual and methodological reinforcing among regional organizations. This is the case in Europe, where exchanges between the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the European Union, NATO, and the Community of Independent States are close and have led to active complementarity and joint projects. The specialities of each of those organizations and their varied composition allows us to deal better with crises and to work towards the future. That is the case in the Balkans and in the Caucasus.

Among regional organizations from different continents, we can do even more. The Organization of American States (OAS) has enabled the OSCE to take its first steps in organizing the fight against terrorism. With the League of Arab States, the OSCE is working on the issue of small arms and light weapons and election monitoring. The African Union is closely following the development of institutions and policies within the OSCE that are available to it. The 18 OSCE missions are trying to strengthen civil society, a

requirement for stability and long-term development, as we have just been reminded. It unites activities in various areas to implement the commitments undertaken by all member States. The missions also provide an opportunity to gain experience that we can share with other regional organizations. In the areas of election monitoring, institution-building and support for minorities, the experience of the OSCE has something that everyone can benefit from.

Thirdly, the OSCE is based on the affirmation of shared values. It is oriented towards the discussion of ideas. It can make its contribution to the collective effort of all international organizations following the United Nations summit. The OSCE was one of the first organizations to affirm that the security of States and individuals depended on a holistic approach, with activities that covered several dimensions — first and foremost, the human dimension — and that those activities should be conducted with a long-term perspective in view. Today respect for the individual and the search for good democratic governance are values that are broadly shared by all international organizations as concepts linked to human security.

The OSCE continues to forge ahead and to be a conceptual laboratory for all its members. It is making progress in areas such as tolerance, the fight against human trafficking, freedom in the media, and environmental security and safety. Those activities are, obviously, open to other organizations. I believe it would be particularly useful for the OSCE to take part in two projects that concern all international organizations: first, the preparations for the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which provides a new and original platform for regional organizations; and, secondly, the dialogue among civilizations, called for by the Secretary-General.

At the high-level meeting of the heads of regional organizations, presided over by the Secretary-General in July, we devised a collective framework to allow us to pool our thinking and coordinate our efforts in this area supported by everyone's goodwill. The framework should enable us to make substantive contributions as a follow-up to the 2005 world summit and, at the same time, work out some details within its outlines. The draft resolution before the Council is a new departure. It will serve as a framework so that in the future mutually beneficial exchanges will both be a permanent working method and provide mutual support. The decisive impetus will have come from Council members, and we are grateful for that.

**The President**: I now call on the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, His Excellency Albert Ramdin.

**Mr. Ramdin**: On behalf of the Organization of American States (OAS), I would like to join previous speakers in expressing our pleasure to be addressing the Security Council today. We thank the Council for inviting us to do so. We also congratulate you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to organize this meeting. We believe that it is timely and appropriate, given the high level of interest and discussion that have taken place on this topic within the General Assembly, the world summit, and other forums within the international community during the past year. We would also like to express our appreciation for the leadership, the interest and the commitment of Secretary-General Annan in this effort.

As both the OAS Secretary General, José Miguel Insulza, and I stated at the sixth high-level meeting between United Nations and regional organizations, held last July in New York, the OAS welcomes a much more structured approach to strengthening collaboration between United Nations and regional organizations in the areas of democracy, development and security, including conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We are pleased and ready to contribute in a substantial manner to the recently established Standing Committee. We believe that a first critical step in establishing a division of labour — defining the roles and responsibilities of the regional organizations, the United Nations and other key actors in the region — is to adopt a shared agenda within the framework of the United Nations on issues of early conflict prevention, security and development.

The OAS views closer cooperation with other multilateral organizations as a critical component of its new action plan for strengthening regional and democratic governability in the Americas. As is well known, the OAS has been actively engaged in several conflict prevention, facilitation, and mediation efforts over the past years. Currently, the OAS is actively involved in facilitating a political settlement of crises in Haiti, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia, through several mechanisms. OAS engagement is not limited to immediate resolution of conflicts, but also provides technical assistance and capacity-building for

the longer term. The OAS uses several options for engagement: missions of the Secretary General, delegations of the Permanent Council in Washington, D.C., special envoys, long-term missions — such as those we have in Haiti and in Colombia — and technical support, as mentioned earlier.

Aside from what the OAS can offer in the way of political mediation, shuttle diplomacy and technical cooperation, the OAS has the advantage of both being able to convene member States to address issues and the ability to work with all levels of Government in forging consensus on important policies, both nationally and subregionally. That capacity for dialogue and decision-making by consensus is the preventive capacity the OAS brings to United Nations regional cooperation.

We recognized the valuable work of the Security Council and acknowledge the important leadership role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security. However, there is much more that can be done to strengthen our respective institutions through closer collaboration, joint analyses, joint implementation of technical cooperation, focused attention on structural prevention and improved, streamlined funding for preventive multilateral actions. Specifically in response to a few of the questions outlined in the concept paper circulated by the President of the Security Council, I would like to highlight a few views that we share and consider important.

First and foremost, I think it is important to understand that the OAS strives to work subregionally, within the Americas, wherever possible. In that respect, we must acknowledge and work with the subregional organizations, such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Central American Integration System and others, which play a critical role in the development of regional stability. Those subregional organizations should strive to work in tandem with the lead multilateral institutions, searching for ways to complement the work of the OAS and the United Nations. As the Secretary-General mentioned, Haiti is a good example both of effective OAS-United Nations cooperation and collaboration and of collaboration among subregional organizations — such as the Association of Caribbean States and CARICOM — in support of Haiti.

We must take into account the many political and institutional lessons learned in our respective areas of expertise and share them with other interested actors. Perhaps the Security Council would consider inviting regional organizations on an annual basis to present key findings from their respective peacebuilding and post-conflict missions. The Standing Committee, now that it has been established, could play a leading role in organizing that type of presentation. The Peacebuilding Commission could allow for representation from every region through participation of a high-level official from regional or subregional organizations. We believe that regional organizations could contribute to the Peacebuilding Commission by assisting in the definition of political objectives and priority areas of peacebuilding in a given country.

We recognize that in particular instances a regional organization may be better suited to take a lead in pre-conflict or post-conflict situations. Political clout, experience in a country and established trust with political actors may allow a regional organization to facilitate a better solution. In the cases of Bolivia and Ecuador in the Western Hemisphere, our role as the Organization of American States has been critical in that regard.

Both the United Nations and regional organizations should, when relevant, place priority on capacity-building after peacekeeping, peacebuilding or crisis support operations. Regional organizations and agencies that continue democratic consolidation efforts through peacebuilding activities should be identified early and supported by the United Nations through mobilized funding and cooperation. In the case of Haiti, that has worked very well between the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

The challenge for the new OAS leadership — both Secretary General Insulza and I were elected just a couple of months ago — is to transform the Organization of American States institutionally and organizationally in such a way that it can deal much more effectively with the new intra-State challenges in the Western Hemisphere. The OAS is working to address those challenges as I speak, striving to develop a far more proactive role in conflict prevention through quiet diplomacy, greater cooperation with other subregional organizations — some of which I mentioned earlier — the sharing of information and experiences, improved analysis and review of normative and legal frameworks. All of those

strategies, in our view, will enhance the capacity and capability of the OAS in early conflict prevention and will help to strengthen the multilateral efforts of regional organizations in the Americas.

Finally, we look forward to working with the United Nations and with other regional organizations to strengthen our capacity to effectively address the many conflicts throughout the world and, in our case, specifically in the Americas.

**The President**: I now invite the Acting Executive Secretary representing the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Professor Omotayo R. Olanyan, to take the floor.

**Mr. Olanyan**: I should like to begin by conveying to you, Mr. Foreign Minister, the warm greetings of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, and by thanking you for organizing this important debate, which is vital to our organization and to development in Africa. His inability to be here today is due not to lack of interest, but rather to critical official engagements on the continent.

The debate in which we are participating today offers a useful opportunity to examine past experiences of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. It will enable us to highlight those things that we have done well and those that we have not. The lessons of successes and failures will provide useful guidance for the consolidation of future cooperation.

It is well known that the objectives of regional organizations can differ in political, military, strategic and economic ways. For us in Africa, our regional organization is essentially for development. But our experience has shown that development can occur only in a peaceful atmosphere. For that reason, we have developed an effective mechanism to address conflict issues on the continent.

Our experience in cooperation has been very useful. Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) is provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. On that basis, we have put in place a significant number of cooperative agreements and adopted several resolutions. Our cooperation is both political and economic. In that regard, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations have collaborated with the AU and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, in addressing conflict prevention, management and resolution and peacekeeping operations on the continent. At the moment, the United Nations is working closely with the African Union and subregional organizations on the ongoing crises in Côte d'Ivoire, the Sudan and Somalia.

Here, I should like to refer to the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations, convened at United Nations Headquarters on 25 and 26 July 2005. Among the conclusions reached at the meeting was that the issues of abject poverty, the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation, pandemics and the social ills of crime and corruption should be resolved in order to ensure international peace and security. More important, the meeting supported the proposed 10-year capacity-building plan for the African Union, which is a laudable action that could effectively promote global peace and stability.

What are the basic elements of cooperation for stabilization? It is necessary to state that the stabilization process entails, among other things, harmony and change within and among the components of the regional system and involves regional systemic factors. Harmony within and among those components depends on factors inside and outside the system. Moreover, the inbuilt capacity to absorb and convert extraregional systemic factors can determine the strength of regional stabilization.

It therefore follows that cooperation for stabilization should target major weaknesses in the institutions and operations of regional organizations and the development problems of their member States.

Regional stabilization should be about cooperation aimed at increased and sufficient support for the consolidation of the African Union Commission. The United Nations, as noted earlier, has already been supporting the Commission's efforts in that regard. However, it is clear that much needs to be done to build up the institution in order to enhance its operationalization. There are deficiencies in the area of human resource capacity-building. That is evident in various departments of the organization, including the Political Department and the Peace and Security

Council. Support for long-term consultants and training programmes is necessary to correct those deficiencies and to enable the Commission to fully carry out its administrative responsibilities. The organs of the AU, including the Peace and Security Council and the Pan-African Parliament, should be strengthened, and specialized committees, the Court of Justice and financial institutions should be established to enable the AU to perform effectively in the area of regional stabilization.

Regional stabilization in Africa is about conflict prevention. The United Nations has a track record of cooperation with the AU in that respect. As it is, however, the AU is far from having a full complement of mechanisms in place to address this complex issue, which has several dimensions. The AU is resolved to, among other things, establish an early warning system to provide information about the development of political and economic crises in African countries. Analytical information from such an early warning system is vital so that the AU can, in collaboration with the United Nations and with relevant subregional organizations, take necessary preventive actions that will not allow crises to degenerate into conflicts or wars. Further cooperation with the United Nations is desirable for the full establishment of an effective early warning system, which would constitute a major stabilizing factor in regional processes.

Regional stabilization is about effective conflict management and resolution. Again, these are areas where the United Nations has cooperated with the AU and where a number of successes have been achieved. Nevertheless, there is still room for further improvement in that respect. There is a need for the development of a mechanism for the rapid termination of hostilities, the implementation of peace agreements and the transition to democratic governance in countries in crisis. The more effective those mechanisms are, the better the chances of regional stabilization.

Regional stabilization is about peacebuilding. In that area, the support of the United Nations is very important for countries emerging from conflict, but the United Nations and the African Union do not have such a mechanism at the moment.

The African Union welcomes the decision by heads of State and Government at the 2005 summit in New York to establish the Peacebuilding Commission. Peacebuilding entails redressing political, legal, economic, social and infrastructural problems at the end of a war. We welcome the efforts of the President of the General Assembly to immediately put in place a mechanism for establishing the Peacebuilding Commission, and we urge that an appropriate role be assigned to regional organizations, which are indispensable partners in the peacebuilding process. Sound post-conflict peacebuilding is a requirement for the prevention of the reactivation of conflict and for laying the foundation for economic growth, development and, therefore, stability.

Regional stabilization implies support for the AU in its efforts to consolidate democracy and good governance. At its summits, the AU has adopted several decisions in those areas. Democracy and good governance should be strengthened in countries that have not experienced crises. The political, legal and economic and social framework for democracy and good governance should be developed to ensure a peaceful political transition. The United Nations is already cooperating in those areas, in particular through the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Development Programme. We encourage increased cooperation with the African Union and African countries in order to ensure national and regional stability.

Regional stabilization is about sustainable economic growth and development. We have in place several programmes, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the AU Strategic Plan. Currently, Africa is lagging behind in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, Africa welcomes the proposals on development and the recognition of the special needs of Africa contained in the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting outcome document (General Assembly resolution 60/1). The stabilization of the continent requires the swift implementation of those recommendations, in particular those relating to an increase in official development assistance and foreign direct investment, the expansion of foreign trade, the cancellation of external debt and the halting and the reversal of the spread of pandemic HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases.

Stunted development is one of the root causes of crises and wars in Africa. Cooperation on implementation should ensure coherence and harmonization. Cooperation should be sustainable and

lead to equitable economic growth in countries. In the absence of sustainable and equitable economic growth and development, economically weak countries in the continent will be more susceptible to crises and internal conflict.

Furthermore, regional stabilization implies regular consultation by the United Nations with the leadership of regional organizations. The dynamic nature of issues in the various regions suggests that there should be regular meetings to discuss issues and reorder priorities in order to effectively resolve them. The United Nations, as already noted, has further developed that arrangement. Its decision at the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations, held in July 2005, on a mechanism for coordination and implementation should be speedily implemented to facilitate regional stabilization.

Finally, the regional stabilization process is about sound political support for the leadership of regional organizations. In the day-to-day activities of regional organizations, the leadership provides direction and responses to issues as they arise in the region. Those actions are generally carried out in consultation with the United Nations and other stakeholders. Cooperation for stabilization should focus on that important area. The cooperation of the United Nations gives regional leaders significant legitimacy. The more cooperation there is with the leadership of regional organizations, the better will be their ability to provide solutions vis-à-vis the forces of destabilization in the region.

In conclusion, I reaffirm that global stability derives from regional stability. It is also an irrefutable fact that regional organizations have the capacity to meaningfully address regional issues if they are adequately empowered through sufficient cooperation with the United Nations. The African Union has the leadership role in the continent's stabilization process for peace, security and sustainable economic growth and development. Now is the time for the United Nations to build on its achievements in cooperation with regional organizations.

**Mr. Wang Guangya** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania as he presides over today's meeting.

We appreciate the statements of the Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the representatives of regional organizations.

Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security is a major issue and a challenging task. The world today faces many interconnected threats, such as armed conflict, terrorist attacks, arms proliferation, humanitarian crises, the spread of disease and drug abuse. Those problems share the common characteristic of being transnational and transregional. To deal effectively with those problems, the United Nations must assume its full role, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations must be strengthened. In the United Nations system, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In recent years, regional organizations have taken on an increasingly important role in conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, counter-terrorism and the response to humanitarian crises. Their work has provided effective support and assistance to the work of the Security Council. The High-level Plenary Meeting outcome document (General Assembly resolution 60/1) recognized that role.

In that context, I would like to make the following three points. First, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, all countries and regions recognize the principle that the Security Council is at the heart of the international machinery for collective security. It is also universally recognized that regional organizations play a positive role in facilitating the resolution of regional issues.

Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter establishes the role of regional arrangements in the settlement of disputes. It also provides guidance for the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. The summit outcome document states clearly that a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is required. That places a demand on our future work and provides an important foundation for the conduct of such cooperation.

Secondly, in the sphere of increasing coordination on practical implementation, regional organizations have unique advantages in dealing with problems in their respective regions. When considering regional hot

spots, the Security Council should heed and respect the views and the recommendations of regional organizations. In the implementation process, the Council should give due attention to the unique advantages of regional organization. For their part, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, regional organizations should take the initiative to keep the Council informed on their actions in a timely manner and keep channels of communication open. It should be noted that regional situations vary greatly, as do regional organizations. Communication and cooperation between the two sides should be governed by the principle of flexibility and should be results-oriented, and efforts should be made to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

Thirdly, we should strengthen mutual assistance and give prominence to Africa. Many issues on the Security Council's agenda relate to Africa. China greatly appreciates the positive efforts of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, as well as of mediation and good offices missions, in seeking solutions to African conflicts.

The necessary financial resources and logistical and technical support must be provided with a view to strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and African regional and subregional organizations so that the peacekeeping and peacebuilding capacities of those organizations can be enhanced.

We welcome the decision in the Summit Outcome document to develop and implement a 10-year plan for capacity-building with the African Union. Such an endeavour will enable the United Nations to better cope with regional conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. It will also benefit the African countries themselves.

There are many regional and subregional mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region that are playing an important role. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is one such mechanism. Since its establishment in 2001, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has gradually developed into an effective mechanism for promoting regional security, stability and development. Last year, it was granted observer status in the General Assembly, and this year it participated in the summit. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization will continue to work, in a spirit of mutual benefit and trust, to promote equality, consultation and respect for cultural diversity and shared development. It will pursue an external policy of not allying with nor targeting other countries and regions, as well as of abiding by the principle of openness. It will cooperate closely with the United Nations with a view to contributing to regional and international peace and security.

Finally, China endorses the draft resolution prepared by the delegation of Romania, which we thank for its efforts.

**The President**: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

**Mr. Baali** (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I would like, first of all, to sincerely thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this debate, which provides us with this opportunity to exchange ideas with the representatives of regional and subregional organizations on the best way of boosting cooperation with the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has increased, and the prospects that are now opening up are more promising than ever. Much remains to be done, however, if we are to better prepare those two partners to face, together, existing and new threats to global peace. The purpose of our meeting today is to make an assessment of the state of such cooperation, to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and to consider what might be done in order to improve it. I would like to comment on just three elements.

The first element relates to the need to rationalize the framework for cooperation and to ensure that it remains adaptable, since we are dealing with matters that are continually evolving. A great deal of work has been carried out in that area by the General Assembly and the Security Council. In our view, this is not a question of rewriting Chapter VIII of the Charter, but of exploring, as much as possible, the resources at our disposal and of basing ourselves on a liberal and pragmatic reading of its provisions.

We must recognize, in this respect — and we pointed this out during our discussions on the draft resolution to be adopted at the end of the debate — that there is a degree of resistance to going off the beaten track. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is not optional but is an imperative need imposed by new global realities. Indeed, the new, complex challenges confronting our

system of collective security require us to strengthen cooperation between all players — the United Nations, regional organizations, Governments and civil society.

Furthermore, regional organizations are playing an increasing role in the settlement of crises in their respective geographic areas, and legitimately aspire to take on increased responsibilities. The Security Council is not being asked to delegate some of its responsibilities to those regional organizations but, rather, to make good use of the contributions of such organizations through improved interaction, on the basis of the principles of complementarity and comparative advantage. The contribution of the African Union (AU) and subregional organizations in Africa in the area of political mediation and conflict prevention, as well as, increasingly, conflict management, thanks in particular to the very active role played by the Peace and Security Council of the AU, is key in this regard.

The second element relates to the mobilization of resources to help regional organizations and to strengthen their capacity for action. The United Nations has acquired a body of experience in planning and managing multifaceted and complex operations, which it can and must share with regional organizations. Although much progress has been made in helping regional organizations, in particular in Africa, to develop their capacity for intervention, greater efforts are required. The Secretariat is prepared to do more, but it is has to deal with insufficient resources and, sometimes, lack of political will on the part of Member States, which prevent it from seeking innovative solutions. In this context, the Darfur crisis provides a clear illustration of the gap that exists between statements and declarations of good faith and practice; it is a test case for cooperation with regional organizations — the yardstick by which the international community's efforts, and its success and failures, will be measured.

The third element relates to the stabilization and peacebuilding phase, during which the United Nations and regional organizations have a great deal to do together. That phase, which is generally considered to be crucial for the success of a peacebuilding process, does not receive the attention that it deserves. We hope that the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission will help to bridge that gap.

**Ms. Løj** (Denmark): Denmark appreciates this opportunity to discuss the issue of improved cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We welcome the Romanian initiative to hold this debate and the fact that the Foreign Minister of Romania is presiding over our discussion.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union (EU).

We welcome the participation today of representatives of a wide range of regional organizations. Their contributions to enhancing international peace and security are of the utmost importance.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations should be developed even further. We feel that two areas in particular are in need of further and timely attention, namely, the African dimension and counter-terrorism. Those two issues are also reflected in the draft resolution initiated by Romania — a draft resolution that Denmark wholeheartedly supports.

In relation to the African dimension, progress has been made. We welcome the continued efforts to strengthen practical cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), as demonstrated most clearly in the case of the African Mission in Sudan.

We would like to encourage enhanced African ownership and participation in conflict management on the continent. The Security Council should explore how best to support ongoing efforts to develop the African security architecture and work closely with the African Union and regional organizations to advance ways and means of cooperation.

Such a coherent approach stimulates operative cooperation between the United Nations, the EU and other international actors. The goal should be to establish efficient partnerships and an equitable division of labour among organizations involved in conflict prevention and peacekeeping.

Let me note that Denmark contributes actively to enhancing African regional and subregional organizations' conflict-prevention capacity, through the European Union and through substantial bilateral assistance. Thus, Denmark provides, on a bilateral

basis, through our Africa Programme for Peace, $40 million to capacity-building.

In relation to the fight against terrorism, Denmark firmly believes that regional organizations can and should play a particularly important role. In fact, we will not succeed in this fight unless regional and subregional organizations firmly commit themselves to that challenge.

First, the more strongly regional organizations vow to condemn terrorism in all its forms, the more successful the international community will be in its fight against that phenomenon. Such an unambiguous message is essential to helping dispel any remaining doubts that terrorism in some form could be acceptable. It is not.

Secondly, as the Council has noted on several occasions, many States are willing to do more in the fight against terrorism but lack the capacity to do so. A key role for regional organizations is to assist members in implementing their international obligations in this field, including by helping them to develop the necessary capacity to fulfil those obligations.

That is a challenge of which the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) is fully aware. As Chairman of that Committee, I urge the full cooperation of all regional and subregional organizations in our collective fight against terrorism.

In conclusion, we see improved cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations as a work in progress. Much has been achieved already, notably on the ground, not least in the Sudan. With the overall goal of enhancing international peace and security, Denmark remains committed to supporting concrete initiatives to further improve cooperation in future. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission will be a very important step in that regard.

**The President:** I invite Mr. Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, to take the floor.

**Mr. Davis:** I join my colleagues in thanking the presidency very much indeed for the invitation to attend this meeting.

I should like to group my remarks under five headings: first, the general relationship between the United Nations and the Council of Europe; secondly, the work of the Council of Europe on conflict prevention; thirdly, the work of the Council of Europe in post-conflict situations; fourthly, our work with the United Nations; and, lastly, what the Council of Europe can offer the United Nations in terms of future work and in the context of the concept paper which was issued a week ago.

Turning, therefore, to our general relationship with the United Nations, we at the Council of Europe believe that it is the responsibility of the United Nations to maintain world peace, and we support it in its work to that end. We believe that there is a link between global security and regional security, and we believe also that there is a link between security, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Of course, democracy, human rights and the rule of law are the core business of the Council of Europe. Those are the reasons why we at the Council of Europe are strong believers in multilateralism and in the world summit pledge to support a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations.

The Council of Europe has a wide range of activities, but most of it could be covered by the generic description of conflict prevention. One good example would be our activities under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. That is a legal instrument which was developed and adopted by the Council of Europe after the changes in Europe in the early 1990s.

Much is known about ethnic conflict and ethnic cleansing in Europe during that period; much less is known about potential ethnic conflict which did not materialize. I choose an example from your own country, Mr. President. In the early 1990s, there was considerable tension on ethnic minority issues and ethnic minority grounds between Romania and Hungary. Contrary to the former Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary chose the Council of Europe way. Both countries signed and ratified the Framework Convention in 1995. The conflict remained potential, not real, and therefore largely unknown.

That example illustrates a trend that I, as Secretary-General of the organization, intend to encourage, namely not only to maintain high standards in human rights, democracy and the rule of law, but also to give a direct and robust response to new and specific challenges on our continent.

As everyone sitting on the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee knows, the Council of Europe has a threefold approach to fighting terrorism. Better legal cooperation, exemplified by our conventions on the suppression of terrorism, cybercrime and money-laundering, respect for human rights and the promotion of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue are some of the ways to address the root causes of terrorism.

We pay special attention to the balance between vigorous measures to combat terrorism on the one hand and strict protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the other. It is our firm view that the absolute prohibition on torture, inhuman and degrading treatment must be upheld. Today a State cannot be a member of the Council of Europe without agreeing to be monitored by a committee on the prevention of torture.

As for intercultural dialogue, for some years we have had dialogue with other continents through our North-South Centre, based in Lisbon. This has included Africa. In coming months and years, we intend to increase and intensify that dialogue, especially on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, in the Middle East, and in Central Asian republics.

Turning now to our other experience of dealing with post-conflict situations in Europe, we have been much involved in multilateral action and individual actions in the Balkans and the South Caucasus in particular.

There are two misunderstandings about the work of the Council of Europe. We give a very broad interpretation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and we regard our work as properly including work on good governance, which includes local and regional government, work on education, culture, cultural heritage, youth and social cohesion issues.

The second misunderstanding is that we are a Strasbourg organization. It is true that we are based in Strasbourg, but we are not restricted to Strasbourg. In recent years our activity has increased in our member States, inside our member States, often in partnership with other regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union, and with the United Nations — the Balkans being a case in point; there has already been some reference to Kosovo.

Turning to our work with the United Nations, let me say that it is not restricted to Kosovo. We have a lot of cooperation already with some United Nations agencies. I think that in some cases, it could be better. That is why I would welcome the idea put forward by my colleague from the OSCE of a framework agreement with the United Nations. We would certainly like to be part of that. I also look forward very much to working with the Peacebuilding Commission in future.

We offer certain assets and resources to the United Nations. We have not only our own expertise; we also have intergovernmental experts: the experts working for our member States - the 46 member countries of the Council of Europe. We offer the Parliamentary Assembly, which has representatives from the parliaments of our 46 member countries. We have a Congress of Local and Regional Authorities which is very similar, with representatives of local government. We have the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance dealing with issues of intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. We have the Court for the protection of human rights, which applies to all our member States and whose rulings must be obeyed in our member States.

We have, of course, a very strong relationship — indeed, a special statutory relationship — with non-governmental organizations, which gives a grassroots link to civil society in Europe. We also have the networks created by expertise, training and other assistance activities in our member States.

The United Nations Security Council has the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in all parts of the world, including Europe. My invitation to you, Mr. President, is for the Security Council to make best use of what the Council of Europe has to offer.

I look forward to our cooperation during the Romanian presidency of the Council of Europe, which is going to start in November. The presidency of our Committee of Ministers, a decision-making body, will last from November until May of next year, and Romania will be followed by the Russian Federation. I am sure that they, too, will wish to encourage this work, in alliance and cooperation with the United Nations.

**The President**: I thank the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for his kind words.

I now invite the Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, His Excellency Mr. Valery Kyrychenko, to take the floor.

**Mr. Kyrychenko** (*spoke in Russian*): We hope that this meeting will enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations in such areas as the maintenance of international peace and security, especially in conflict prevention and settlement, and in post-conflict peacebuilding.

As is known, the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was a very difficult matter. In essence, it was formed under the pressure of the need for a firm response to the appearance of a fundamentally new geopolitical situation. This, in fact, was compounded by a problem that arose because of a deep crisis in the economy and other spheres of public life in the former Soviet areas.

By and large, however, the formation of the CIS put an end to a chaotic process of break-up of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and to its destructive impulse; this historical fact is recognized by the entire international community. It is an unmistakable achievement of the CIS that it formed new structures for the establishment of fundamentally new inter-State relations, allowed for a peaceful way for political disengagement for the former Soviet Republics and promoted the establishment of new sovereign States.

Nonetheless, we were not able to avoid conflicts and contradictions. Unfortunately, some of them spilled over into open confrontation and conflict. The most serious were in Tajikistan, Georgia, Moldova and the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. Major factors that promoted the emergence of conflict situations in the former Soviet areas are as follows. Socio-economic problems worsened and social disparity and polarization increased among the population. There was a lack of clarity and mixed interests among the major geo-political centres with regard to new independent States with regard to spheres of influence. Political forces struggled for power, and there was an upturn for the armed forces. Problems in inter-ethnic relations arose, and there was a mass exodus of national minorities, especially Russian speakers. Clan and other types of conflicts grew, and in regions of Central Asia and the Caucasus the role and influence of Islamic fundamentalism, and of international centres of terrorism, the drug trade and other criminal phenomena, increased.

For the stabilization process, it is very important to define and analyse possible reasons for the emergence of conflict in each specific situation, in order to prevent and settle those conflicts, for peacebuilding in the post-conflict area, and to ensure the security and strengthening of trust and confidence.

In the CIS, the system to prevent and settle conflicts, post-conflict peacebuilding and the strengthening of the stabilization process are at a formative stage. Nevertheless, through the efforts of the CIS countries — first and foremost, of the Russian Federation — and in close cooperation with, and with the help of, United Nations structures and those of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we have been able to achieve some results.

There have been a number of cases of States in conflict where we have broken through the stage of armed conflict and gone to political dialogue. We searched for compromise and solutions; as a result of the Russian Federation's mediation in Nagorno-Karabakh, on 12 May 1994 a ceasefire was established. In Transdniester, a ceasefire has been in effect since July 1994, on the basis of the agreements and principles for a peaceful settlement of armed conflict. In the conflict area in Abkhazia, Georgia, since 14 May 1994 we have had an agreement on a ceasefire and disengagement of forces.

We must especially point out that in 2000 we were able to settle the conflict in Tajikistan. A settlement was signed on 27 June 1997 in Moscow between the Tajik officials and the opposition, an overall agreement on the establishment of peace and national harmony. As a consequence, hostile activities ended, and the collective CIS peace forces and the United Nations observer missions were dissolved. That played a significant role in the Tajik settlement.

Now the next stage — that is, post-conflict peacebuilding — has occurred. In order to intensify cooperation, the Executive Committee of the CIS has established working relations with the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding. In October of last year, a Memorandum of Understanding and Partnership was signed between our organizations for a post-conflict recovery for the Republic of Tajikistan. The end of the civil war in that country is a clear example of how, through the joint efforts of the United Nations,

the OSCE and the CIS, an armed conflict in one of the bloodiest conflict areas at the end of the twentieth century can be practically settled.

We in the CIS understand that the lack of settlement in the conflict in the territories of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and in and around Nagorno-Karabakh essentially has an impact on the political, social and economic conditions for development in those States that have been drawn into conflict. Those factors have made difficult the process of a democratic society and prevent the full functioning of a free trade area. They are a threat to peace and stability in the region and in the CIS as a whole.

For this reason, we must find ways for new forms of cooperation and joint action among regional organizations in their areas of responsibility, as well as new approaches to the stabilization process. We agree that developing cooperation between regional organizations is more important than ever, since the major threat to security stems from new global conflicts and challenges.

In this connection, we feel it possible to put forward some proposals designed to consolidate efforts and cooperation in the prevention and settlement of conflicts and in post-conflict peacebuilding. The CIS has adopted a concept on the prevention and settlement of conflicts in the territory of States of the CIS. Such documents are being worked out by other international organizations as well. Through a comparative analysis, we have been able to prepare an overall document, which includes a platform for security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit.

Also, as we see it, one urgent task is the working out of a comprehensive plan for measures for building trust in the political, humanitarian, environmental and other spheres, such as the reasons for lack of confidence among States, and retaining international membership of the United Nations, missions, and the OSCE in areas of conflict. We think we could have a significant number of members in missions who, to our mind, could be nationals of CIS countries that are not parties to the conflict and that are not neighbours to those in conflict. With this approach, we could avoid duplication of effort. At the same time, we could expand the possibility for close cooperation in the political and military spheres, which are brought into play in the peacekeeping and stabilization processes. In order to achieve maximum harmony and effectiveness in the activities of the CIS and the United Nations, we should provide a clear machinery for consultations among the interested structures and an exchange of information on the status of the settlement of a conflict, on the situation in the regions and on planned and implemented stabilization measures.

Joint seminars and conferences, with the participation of their leaders and specialists from the relevant structures of international organizations, might be of some assistance. By using such a form of cooperation, we could not only exchange information and experience, but also could promote a quest for new methods and forms to prevent, localize and settle conflicts and for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Another urgent matter is cooperation in settling the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh. We have in mind the participation of representatives of the CIS Executive Committee as observers in the negotiation process in the Karabakh settlement. That was expressed by the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, and the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Heydar oglu Aliyev.

Regarding the Transdniester conflict, we also believe that the representatives of the Executive Committee could take part as observers in the negotiation process and in settling the conflict in and around Transdniester.

Regarding a settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, we are compelled to note the two key issues — the future political status of Abkhazia within Georgia, and the problem of the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes — still have not been solved. For this reason, the major task this year, as we see it, is the creation of favourable conditions for negotiations, establishing an atmosphere of at least some minimal degree of trust among the parties, support for the efforts of the Russian Federation and development of the Sochi process for a settlement.

**Mr. Denisov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome you, Sir, as President of the Security Council. Your presence in this Chamber, as well as the participation in today's meeting of the Secretary-General and leaders and representatives of a number of leading regional organizations, convincingly demonstrates the importance of today's discussion.

In the outcome document of the 2005 summit, world leaders stated their commitment to ensuring international security on the basis of a comprehensive, collective approach and strict observance of the Charter of the United Nations. An important element for further efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the world Organization, as the major multilateral institution, is the gradual development of multifaceted cooperation and coordination on the part of the United Nations and the Security Council with regional and other intergovernmental organizations, above all in the sphere of peacekeeping. Such interaction, as is clearly set forth in the outcome document, must continue to be firmly based on the Charter, in particular, Chapter VIII. No less important is the reaffirmation by world leaders of the need for strict respect for basic principles and criteria for international peacekeeping activities at all stages of the processes of preventing and settling conflicts, and also during post-conflict peacebuilding.

First and foremost, what we have in mind is the immutability of the principle of the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and its exclusive prerogative to sanction the use of force by the international community. The agenda of cooperation between the United Nations and regional partners is becoming ever more multifaceted and larger in scope.

In addition to peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks, we now have the fight against weapons of mass destruction, the illegal spread of small arms and light weapons, the settlement of other destabilizing transborder problems and the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime. In the area of cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and regional partners — and the list of these organizations is well known — a great deal of positive experience has been gained. That has to be built upon, making use of it to solve increasingly complex problems in the framework of the multifunctional peacekeeping operations. We welcome precisely this attitude, expressed today by representatives of the relevant organizations, including the speaker who directly preceded me, the Deputy Chair of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth for Independent States (CIS), Mr. Kyrychenko.

The peacekeepers of the CIS, along with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, are maintaining security and stability in the area of the Georgian/Abkhazian conflict. This is not an easy task, but there is no real alternative to interaction in this format. Russia is determined to continue energetically promoting enhanced trust and cooperation, first and foremost in the peacekeeping sphere between the United Nations and the CIS.

Of great potential is the cooperation being established between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. In the framework of this organization intensive work is under way to create its own peacekeeping potential, and that includes involvement in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is playing an important role in ensuring stability and security in the Euro-Asian region. At its last summit, in Astana, Kazakhstan, its members expressed willingness to develop cooperation with the United Nations on a whole series of timely tasks, including the fight against international terrorism and illegal drug trafficking, as well as promoting post-conflict settlement arrangements in Afghanistan.

We are convinced that in developing the decisions of the summit, regional partners and the world Organization should continue to meet each other halfway. We hope that the regional and subregional organizations will offer their resources in a more active way and help both in the prevention of conflicts and in peacekeeping. For its part, the United Nations and the Security Council should continue to pay unflagging attention to strengthening coordination and cooperation with these structures, with a reasonable division of labour and respect for the authority of the Security Council.

In this context, we note with satisfaction the decision of the summit in favour of an official agreement between the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariats of the regional organizations. One of the short-term priorities in the implementation of these summit decisions is the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission, which is called upon to help the Security Council and, to the extent possible, other United Nations bodies in the speedy recovery of countries emerging from crisis and establishing guarantees to prevent conflicts from re-emerging. We are certain that members of the United Nations will be in a position to ensure the launching of the activities of this Commission at the beginning of next year.

Russia consistently supports the holding of regular high-level meetings between the United Nations Secretary-General and the leadership of regional organizations, and we note the agreements achieved to increase such a practice, including by holding such meetings on an annual basis.

We hope that adoption today of the Security Council resolution at the initiative of Romania and, on the whole, the outcome of today's discussion, will allow us to make progress in the process of improving cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In that way we will be able, through our joint efforts, to fully achieve the potential of the collective security system set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, the commitment to which was clearly demonstrated by the participants in the 2005 summit.

**Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation extends a warm welcome to the honourable minister of Romania and thanks Romania for organizing this important and timely debate. We also acknowledge the presence of regional organizations participating in this debate.

We find this debate useful because regional organizations play a vital role in maintaining peace and stability in their respective regions. It is also timely, as regional organizations have become increasingly involved in conflict resolution and peacekeeping missions, alongside those of the United Nations. Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter provides a basis for a symbiotic relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Numerous regional organizations have actively participated in the settlement of local disputes, either on their own initiative or by reference from the Security Council. The active involvement of the European Union in Kosovo, the Caribbean Community and the Organization of American States in Haiti, the African Union in Burundi and Sudan, and the Economic Community of West African States in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire are just some of the cases in point.

Several comprehensive reports have been issued by the Secretary-General, noting the level of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The General Assembly has also passed relevant resolutions on the subject, calling for, among other things, assistance in strengthening the institutional and operational capacity of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting underscores the need for a closer working partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations such as the African Union

As the primary organ of the United Nations responsible for peace and security, the Security Council has the power and the prerogative to advance that cooperation to a higher level in order to make it more effective and responsive to challenges that threaten international peace and security. We wish to support your initiative, Mr. President, and that of your delegation, in advancing the debate on the subject to institutionalize cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We also support the practice of holding annual high-level meetings between the Secretariat and heads of regional organizations.

While appreciating the existing cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, we strongly believe that more can be done to improve that cooperation. That is particularly important in the areas of capacity and resource mobilization. Regional organizations have the advantage of physical proximity to conflicts as well as a greater understanding of their causes, but they are constrained by capacity and operational requirements. Supporting stand-by arrangements and rapid deployment capability is one of the ways to strengthen regional peacekeeping capacities. The 10-year United Nations programme to strengthen peacekeeping in Africa, contained in the outcome document of the high-level summit, is a most relevant initiative in that regard.

The new Peacebuilding Commission will usher in a new era of partnership between the African Union and its subregions to stabilize peace and to anchor good governance and sustainable development in countries emerging from conflict in Africa. There is also a need for political partnership between regional organizations and the United Nations to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. The working relationship that has evolved between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as in the cases of Côte d'Ivoire and the Sudan, needs to be encouraged and institutionalized. It is a mutually supporting partnership in a creative and complementary division of labour. That kind of

partnership enhances multilateralism in promoting collective security at all levels.

While we recognize the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, we are also mindful of the advantages of horizontal cooperation among regional organizations. That is important in facilitating the sharing of resources, expertise and experiences. The European Union, for instance, has been very helpful to Africa in establishing the African Peace Facility, as well as in providing technical assistance and financial support to the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community to support their conflict management efforts. The ongoing partnership in Darfur between the African peacekeeping mission there, along with the support from the United Nations the European Union, NATO and bilateral assistance, is a case in point.

It is our hope that this debate will contribute positively to the efforts to establish a more coherent cooperation framework between the United Nations and regional organizations that will ensure effective maintenance of international peace and security, sustained by regional cooperation in the economic, social and cultural initiatives undertaken by countries of the various regions in a much more proactive fashion.

We thank the delegation of Romania for preparing the draft resolution on this subject, which we fully support.

**The President**: I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

**Mr. Oshima** (Japan): We thank the Romanian presidency for its timely initiative to once again convene a meeting as a follow-up to the previous one held under its presidency in July 2004, to focus the Council's attention on the important question of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. We also appreciate the presence of Romania's Foreign Minister to preside over this important debate.

My delegation welcomes as well the participation in this debate of regional and subregional organizations, representing different parts of the world, that are actively involved in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and in promoting cooperation with the United Nations. We benefit enormously from their comments, ideas and proposals.

I welcome in particular the participation today of an important subregional organization from our part of the world. I am referring in particular to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which plays a vital role in promoting cooperation, harmony and resilience for economic and social development, as well as, in recent years, in such political- and security-related arenas as counter-terrorism and fighting piracy.

As is widely acknowledged, regional organizations are playing an increasingly important role in the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts, including in addressing their root causes. That is a very welcome and important development that deserves our full encouragement and support. The 2005 outcome document of the Assembly's High-level Plenary Meeting did just that by supporting a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, including through the increased involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council and enhanced support for capacity-building at the regional level.

We note in particular, and applaud, the increasingly active and effective role played by the African Union in the prevention of conflict and political mediation. We welcome the political commitment and the increasing sense of regional ownership with which the African Union and Africa's subregional organizations have engaged in peace processes in a number of serious situations on the continent. Just this month, for example, the African Union Peace and Security Council gave new impetus to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. The African Union is also engaged in peacekeeping on the ground in Darfur and in peace negotiations in Abuja. In addition, the Economic Community of West African States and other subregional organizations are making efforts to prevent deadly conflicts in Africa. We pay tribute to them.

Those welcome efforts made by regional and subregional organizations in Africa and elsewhere should, as necessary, be supported or complemented by the United Nations, and by the Security Council in particular. To that end, interaction and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and

subregional organizations needs to be strengthened, and concrete ways should be developed to facilitate that. We support, for example, creating more opportunities for heads of regional and subregional organizations to brief the Security Council on their activities as they relate to the maintenance of peace and security. Likewise, the holding of meetings between representatives of regional organizations and members of the Security Council during the Council's field missions are useful ways to strengthen the needed interaction and cooperation.

More specifically, we note and welcome the growing role of regional organizations in peacekeeping operations, particularly in Africa, where they are most numerous. We believe that promoting further cooperation and creating partnerships between regional organizations and the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping is a desirable and feasible goal that should be positively pursued. To that end, several issues will need to be considered.

First, the capacity to rapidly deploy peacekeeping personnel to meet emergency requirements has always been a challenge. To better cope with that challenge, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been advocating for some time the idea of a strategic reserve of peacekeepers that can be relied upon for rapid deployment once a peacekeeping mission is established. That interesting proposal is still under discussion, with many questions yet to be resolved. The outcome document by world leaders also talked about the idea of rapidly deployable capacities.

In developing such a rapid-deployment capacity, regional organizations can play a useful role, and in fact some organizations — the European Union, for example — have developed such a capacity. Other regional organizations can follow — if necessary, with the assistance of the donor community — for the provision of training, equipment and other capacity-building assistance to the troop-contributing members of regional organizations, such as the standby force of the African Union.

Secondly and more generally, in the area of peace operations, more effective cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations that are engaged in peace operations is desirable. While the role of regional organizations in peace operations has been growing, their capacities for sustainable operations, particularly in developing regions of the world, are often limited. The United Nations can play a useful supporting or facilitating role in order to strengthen the sustainability of peace operations conducted by regional organizations, particularly when the operations in question are authorized by the Security Council.

To that end, various forms of support can be considered, ranging from United Nations assistance in military planning, such as that now being provided to the African Union mission in the Sudan, to support in areas where regional organizations and their member States face difficulties, including in transport, logistics and engineering.

Before closing, let me state that we believe that there is an important role in the proposed peacebuilding commission for regional organizations, and we strongly support the participation of regional organizations, as appropriate, in the activities of the peacebuilding commission.

Today's discussion is timely and provides an important opportunity to take stock of the current state of affairs and consider the future course of action in meeting the challenges of enhancing cooperation and coordination between regional organizations and the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. We trust that today's debate will take us one step further in that direction.

My delegation appreciates the effort of the Romanian delegation in preparing a draft resolution on the subject, which we strongly support.

**The President**: I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

**Sir Emyr Jones Parry** (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak also on behalf of the European Union and those countries that have aligned themselves with this statement.

We welcome the Foreign Minister's participation this morning and thank you, Sir, for convening this debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, a subject in which the European Union takes an intense interest. For that reason, the United Nations and the European Union signed a joint declaration on cooperation in crisis management in September 2003. We also see this debate as part of the implementation process of the world summit outcome. I should like to thank all those representatives of

regional organizations and entities who have joined us today.

Over the past few years, we have seen cooperation in peace and security between regional organizations and the United Nations expand, strengthen and develop in unprecedented ways. In many senses, that reflects the changing nature of conflict. Most conflicts of the last 15 years have been internal conflicts — civil wars that may have erupted owing to failures of governance, abuse of human rights, religious or ethnic persecution, and economic exclusion. Those internal conflicts have invariably spilled over, causing regional problems.

For countries torn apart by civil war, peace is hard won and recovery a long and complex process. And for the international community, support for a peace agreement following civil war is not just about observing violations of a ceasefire. It is now a multidimensional task. It extends beyond observation to robust peacekeeping, where necessary, but also encompasses the full range of civilian and civilian police tasks, from the provision of immediate humanitarian assistance, to support for long-term development plans; from the demobilization of ex-combatants to reintegration programmes for those returning to their communities; from meeting immediate need for police on the ground to long-term institutional reform of the police force and the monitoring and promotion of human rights. Both the United Nations and regional organizations have been involved in all those tasks in conflict situations, in many cases in partnership with each other. They have had to adapt their capabilities and modes of cooperation to meet those new needs.

Let me give just a few examples of how the United Nations and regional organizations have cooperated in recent times. In Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, it was the Economic Community of West African States that provided the first troops on the ground and therefore the initial capability for stabilization in advance of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In Darfur, as my Tanzanian colleague has pointed out, the African Union's peacekeeping force, the African Union Mission in Sudan, is carrying the burden on the ground and functions with the financial support of the European Union through the African Peace Facility. In Bosnia, there have been a number of linked interventions by the United Nations and its partners. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina has now been succeeded by the European Union's Police Mission in Bosnia, and the European Union has replaced the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the main stabilization role, with support from NATO. Another example is Kosovo, where NATO troops have provided the main stabilization force, the Kosovo Force, which has operated under a United Nations mandate and in tandem with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Furthermore, UNMIK itself provides an example of United Nations cooperation with others, through the European Union's leadership of UNMIK's pillar IV and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's leadership of pillar II.

From the development perspective, there are several instances of useful cooperation. One such example is the strategic partnerships and agreements concluded between the European Commission and several United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

The European Union believes that the case for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has been emphasized by those examples and many more, as well as by the interventions we heard this morning. Cooperation matters because regional organizations may have a more profound understanding of the situation in those countries; they may have leverage where the United Nations or other international partners do not; and, like good neighbours, regional organizations care more about what is happening in their own backyard and may be prepared to do something about it more quickly than others.

No one country or organization — not even the United Nations — can be expected to have all the capabilities to assist a country in conflict. Partnership is essential if we are to get the tasks of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding done. In doing so, we must, however, keep in mind the overall responsibility for international peace and security vested in this Security Council.

Let me turn to some of the opportunities and challenges of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

First, the European Union believes that more can be done to improve cooperation in conflict prevention and to help regional organizations prevent conflict in

their own regions. The United Nations and regional organizations should, as a matter of course, share early warning information and, where possible, take forward joint work to prevent the outbreak of conflict. For that reason, the European Union and the United Nations Secretariat conduct regular desk-to-desk dialogue, and that needs to be strengthened.

Secondly, in his report "In larger freedom", Secretary-General Annan urged us to establish

> "an interlocking system of peacekeeping capacities that will enable the United Nations to work with relevant regional organizations in predictable and reliable partnerships" (*A/59/2005, para. 112*).

We need to build an understanding of the comparative capabilities of different organizations and the know-how to work together in a range of different circumstances and at short notice. That is not to say that there should be a strict division of labour. Rather, in order to be effective, the international community needs to know which organization can do what, and in what time frame. The summit outcome built on "In larger freedom" by encouraging the efforts of the European Union and other regional entities to develop capacities for rapid deployment, standby and bridging arrangements. We should take forward work on these areas now, including issues of interoperability and of how to effect a successful transition from an operation led by the United Nations to one led by a regional entity, and vice versa.

Thirdly, the relationship between regional organizations and the Peacebuilding Commission will be crucial. The place of such organizations in the Commission's country-specific work is assured in the summit outcome. Regional organizations will have a key role to play in providing information from the field and in helping to formulate peacebuilding strategies during discussions within the Commission. This will also be the means to build greater coherence between actions of the United Nations and those of regional organizations on peacebuilding issues.

Fourthly, building the capacity of regional organizations needs to be given serious long-term support. In particular, the European Union welcomes the reference in the summit outcome document to the development and implementation of a 10-year plan for capacity-building with the African Union. Direct contact and cooperation among regional organizations should be encouraged. The United Nations also has role to play in this, given its wide experience, its network of expertise and its potential to play a coordinating role.

Fifthly, developments relating to regional organizations should become a regular part of the Secretary-General's reporting to the Security Council, and, as appropriate, the Council should meet regularly with the heads of regional and subregional organizations. In this way the Council will be better informed about the situation on the ground and about the options available for a given country. In this respect, the European Union welcomes the provisions of the draft resolution that has been agreed for this meeting.

Finally, let me say a word about cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in combating terrorism. Pursuing terrorists or proliferators requires a cross-border response. Regional organizations may often be ideally placed to help countries make that successful response. But at the same time, to be able to tackle these threats with really effective international cooperation, we as individual States need to have some common ground. We need a common vision and a common language. We need common standards in what we do, in the form of new legal or political norms. This is where the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations have a major role to play. The European Union would welcome the opportunity to further enhance counter-terrorism cooperation with the United Nations.

In conclusion, regional organizations now play a major role in assisting the Security Council, and the United Nations as a whole, in the maintenance of international peace and security. This is a fact that is being borne out today in conflict and post-conflict situations all around the world. The European Union looks forward to strengthened cooperation with the United Nations and regional organizations in all capacities.

Like other members of the Council, the United Kingdom welcomes and will support the proposed draft resolution on this item.

**The President**: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Hamidon Ali, Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

**Mr. Hamidon**: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Malaysia.

ASEAN joins others in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

ASEAN is pleased to note that cooperation with the United Nations has been pursued in many areas of common interest and concern. ASEAN fully supports multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. In that connection, and with a view to promoting peace and stability in the region, the eighth ASEAN summit, held at Bangkok in 1995, agreed that ASEAN should explore ways and means of enhancing cooperation with the United Nations.

With regard to pursuing that commitment, we recall the successful and fruitful meeting held between ASEAN leaders and the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the first ASEAN-United Nations summit, held on 12 February 2000 in Bangkok. The summit called for closer cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations in activities such as exchanging information and organizing conferences and seminars on issues relating to regional security, with financial support from the United Nations. Since that summit, ASEAN member countries and the ASEAN secretariat have worked closely with the relevant United Nations entities, in particular the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in organizing a series of annual regional seminars. The fourth United Nations-ASEAN Conference on Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in South-East Asia, with the theme of "The ASEAN Security Community and the United Nations", held in Jakarta on 24 and 25 February 2004, was a product of such cooperation. The fifth such United Nations-ASEAN conference is scheduled to be held in the first half of 2006.

To further strengthen the foundations of ASEAN-United Nations cooperation, the second ASEAN-United Nations summit was held on 13 September 2005 at the periphery of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. In addition to ASEAN leaders, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the ASEAN Secretary-General, the World Health Organization, UNDP, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS were invited to participate in the summit. ASEAN leaders and the Secretary-General of the United Nations took the opportunity to review and discuss broad areas of cooperation, including energy security, debt relief, health, disaster management, trade and investment and peace and security. The summit also discussed the High-level Plenary Meeting and United Nations reform.

On peace and security, ASEAN leaders and the Secretary-General of the United Nations recognized the linkages between development, security and human rights and committed themselves to enhance cooperative efforts to combat international terrorism at the national, regional and international levels. The United Nations also welcomed the possibility of ASEAN seeking observer status in the United Nations. The ASEAN-United Nations summit affirmed its support for multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. The summit also expressed support for the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization and the multilateral system it represents to meet the challenges of the millennium. ASEAN looks forward to future summit meetings with the United Nations to maintain and promote closer cooperation between the two organizations.

Moreover, the adoption of General Assembly resolution 57/35 in 2002 generated additional impetus in our cooperation, as it encouraged both ASEAN and the United Nations to increase contacts and to further identify areas of cooperation, as appropriate. In that regard, ASEAN and the United Nations, as well as the specialized agencies, must explore ways and means of promoting further ASEAN-United Nations cooperation.

We wish to emphasize that for the past 38 years ASEAN has succeeded in fostering an atmosphere of peace and cooperation in South-East Asia, as ASEAN moves towards the establishment of the ASEAN Community, with the ASEAN Security Community as one of its three pillars, along with the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Social-Cultural Community. We are contributing to global peace, stability and comprehensive security. We will also give particular attention to the efforts of the United Nations in peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and

preventive diplomacy as well as to the strengthening of the work of the United Nations in the social and economic fields.

In coping with non-traditional threats and the challenges of globalization, ASEAN wishes to reiterate the urgent need to further strengthen cooperation with the United Nations in the areas of disaster management and dealing with emerging and resurgent infectious diseases such as avian influenza and severe acute respiratory syndrome.

ASEAN, as a driving force for the ASEAN Regional Forum, has maintained contacts with various international and regional organizations, including the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the aim of exchanging experiences and best practices in promoting peace and security. As an established multilateral regional security forum, the ASEAN Regional Forum embodies the principal regional process, initiated by ASEAN to engage its dialogue partners and other interested countries in the Asia-Pacific region to come together for confidence-building dialogue and cooperation activities.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers also hold regular consultations with their counterparts from other regional organizations on the margins of the annual General Assembly sessions in New York. Under this arrangement, ASEAN Foreign Ministers have met their counterparts from the Rio Group, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. These meetings serve a very useful purpose by promoting mutual understanding and cooperation on a myriad of issues of common interest.

We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting, which has enabled ASEAN to interface with the Security Council and hence to expand further the scope of cooperation between our regional organization and the United Nations system.

Last but not least, we wish Romania's presidency a great success.

**The President**: I thank Ambassador Hamidon Ali for the kind words he addressed to the presidency. I now invite His Excellency Mr. Martin Erdmann, Assistant Secretary General of the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to take the floor.

**Mr. Erdmann:** Let me first of all join others in thanking the Romanian presidency for having convened this meeting, for taking this initiative and for giving us the opportunity to present our views on today's very important subject.

I represent an institution, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which is 56 years old, almost as old as the United Nations. During the first 40 years of its existence, NATO had a very specific role in the historic context of what we call the period of the cold war. Those times are long gone, and the once static and passive alliance of European and North American democracies has changed profoundly.

Today, NATO is no longer focused on deterrence. Instead, we have embarked on a journey to turn the alliance into a provider of stability in Europe and even beyond. This journey began in response to a brutal act of violence in the Balkans. Ten years ago, in 1995, the Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia and Herzegovina became the symbol of a tragedy that could have been avoided if the international community had acted more resolutely.

Srebrenica was a wake-up call. It was a turning point for Europe, and it was a defining point for NATO. Srebrenica has taught us that we have to face challenges earlier. It spurred NATO allies to engage themselves more resolutely in the search for a solution to the Bosnian conflict. The result was a major peacekeeping operation — first the Implementation Force (IFOR), later the Stabilization Force (SFOR) — the first even in NATO history.

In 1999, in the Kosovo air campaign, NATO had already learned how to act faster, but we were still not fast enough to prevent too many innocent civilian deaths. Finally in 2001, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we were successful. We managed to prevent a civil war from breaking out.

That is, so to speak, the past. NATO has become an organization that defends the security of its members and provides stability far beyond its own borders. Although not a regional organization per se, but an international intergovernmental organization, the alliance has evolved over the years into a security manager in a broad sense, first in Europe and now beyond.

In 2003, under a United Nations mandate, NATO established the International Stabilization Assistance

Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in order to assist the Government of Afghanistan and the international community in maintaining security within the Force's area of operations. ISAF provided a safe and secure environment conducive to free and fair elections. In 2004, under a United Nations mandate, NATO established a training mission in Iraq, helping the Iraqi Government to exercise its capability to address the security needs of the Iraqi people by itself. And only this year, on the basis again of a United Nations mandate, NATO has started to provide support to the African Union Mission in Darfur, complementing efforts of other international players. Only last week, NATO took quick action in response to the recent earthquake in Pakistan by opening an air bridge for providing humanitarian relief, in close cooperation with the United Nations and the European Union.

(*spoke in French*)

All of that shows that NATO has learned its lesson from Srebrenica 10 years ago. There is no realistic alternative to a policy of engagement. But there is another lesson that we have learned in order to meet the new security challenges: the international community must act together. The challenges of the twenty-first century do not respect borders. In order to meet them, we need the broadest possible international cooperation. No nation and no institution can do it alone.

We need this community of engagement based on the particular experience of each institution. In this context, the alliance has committed itself to substantially improving its capacity to face up to new challenges. A successful response requires not only political determination but also appropriate military capacity. Our partners — in the Caucasus, in Central Asia, the Mediterranean Dialogue countries, the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the contact countries, such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand — have often contributed to our operations and thus constitute a considerable portion of our capacity. Besides promoting interoperability, the alliance assists its partners with defence sector reform and in addressing together the security and stability challenges we are all facing, such as terrorism and border security.

(*spoke in English*)

Cooperation with international organizations is equally important, and here we return to today's subject. Our experience on the ground in various missions over the past 10 years shows that we all have to work together and to play our respective strengths. In a world in which managing security has become so complex, it is essential that we develop a common understanding. That is the first step towards finding effective solutions. And that is why having regular and structured relationships between NATO and the European Union is so important. NATO is ready to further enhance this relationship, which is already solid in practice and which has matured in several theatres on a more formal basis. As for the Standing Committee, from our point of view it is an important contribution to strengthening the mechanics of cooperation, and we stand ready to engage ourselves in its work.

There is no doubt that interaction will increase. It is in everyone's interest to do so, as was highlighted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Be it through a structured dialogue, the Peacebuilding Commission or the Standing Committee we will continue to address pertinent issues for sustainable peace and security.

Here, I would use a concrete example of the need for closer cooperation — Afghanistan. In three months' time we will all meet in London to coordinate the development of a post-Bonn process for that country. That will be a real challenge, but it is also an excellent opportunity to show that our organizations are sharing the responsibility for the daunting job ahead of us.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Romanian presidency of the Security Council once again for having taken the initiative to organize this important exchange of views.

**The President**: I thank the His Excellency Mr. Erdmann for his kind words addressed to me.

**Mr. Sardenberg** (Brazil): I would like to express our appreciation to His Excellency Minister Mihai Razvan Ungureanu, and to the delegation of Romania under his able leadership, for convening this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, which affords the Security Council the opportunity to reassess this pertinent subject in the light of the recent World Summit. I also thank the Secretary-General and the representatives of the various regional and subregional organizations in attendance for their invaluable contribution to this debate.

As stated in the President's concept paper, the "time is right for the relationship between the Council and regional organizations to become more focused and organized" (*S/2005/638, p. 3*). Slightly over a month ago, in the 2005 World Summit Outcome our heads of State and Government clearly reaffirmed the importance of regional and subregional organizations for the international community as a whole and for the work of the United Nations in the field of international peace and security in particular. Institutional cooperation with those organizations is certainly required in key areas related to the settlement of disputes, threats to and breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. In the outcome document their indispensable role was recognized in the fields of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, responsibility to protect and in efforts to meet the special needs of Africa.

The position taken in the outcome document stems from undeniable empirical realities: in Darfur, the African Union bears the brunt of the operations to oversee the ceasefire; in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States has gone extra miles to quell critical situations; in Nagorny-Karabakh, OSCE relentlessly pursues an end to the territorial dispute; in Kosovo and in Afghanistan, NATO provides support to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions; and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the European Union has taken over the task of consolidating peace.

In addition, I would like to focus on two instances that are particularly close to Brazilian hearts and minds. In Guinea-Bissau, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) has done remarkable work — even more so if we consider its restricted means — in helping to organize the recent elections, which were deemed free and fair by international observers. Now, CPLP is turning its efforts towards providing support for institution-building and restructuring. As is also the case with the International Organization of la Francophonie, organizations originally based on common cultural backgrounds have been consistently increasing their involvement, support and direct assistance to peacemaking and peacebuilding initiatives. The Council should expand cooperation with such institutions.

In Haiti, the Organization of American States (OAS) is closely cooperating with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti in organizing elections and has succeeded so far in registering more than 3 million voters for the coming ballot. That amounts to more registrations than in the last two elections in the country. Such commendable work is not restricted to the electoral field. In Haiti, electoral registration provides a large segment of the population with its only credible civil registration, another essential instrument of citizenship. In the spirit of promoting the kind of cooperation that this initiative by the Romanian presidency stimulates, my country is making a substantial contribution to the elections in Haiti, based on an agreement recently signed between Brazil and the United Nations Development Programme, and based on our cooperation with the OAS.

Brazil welcomes increased coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In establishing such important connections, however, we must be careful not to overstretch the limited resources of some of those organizations and be mindful of their respective competences. Constitutive charters do not always allow for the kinds of cooperation the United Nations might be seeking. Moreover, we believe that whenever the situation of a country is brought to the attention of the Council, the view of countries in the affected region and members of regional organizations should be heard and taken into account.

I would like to emphasize the need for increased attention to an area where regional organizations can play a crucial role: conflict prevention. More than once, my delegation has stated in the Council that major efforts by regional organizations should be targeted at the root causes of conflicts, in particular those that may be region-specific. Eradicating the root causes of conflict usually demands time and strenuous efforts. Regional organizations are in a unique position to address those causes, be they of a political, economic, cultural or social character. Their proximity and inside knowledge of local conflict situations allows regional organizations to deal with the specific elements that may precipitate even more critical situations.

Certainly, the Security Council can strengthen the capabilities of regional organizations in conflict prevention, and in the field special representatives of the Secretary-General should be attentive at all times to

the views and capacities of relevant regional organizations. Nevertheless, the principles determining cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should be sufficiently broad and based on the central idea that for each afflicted area it is possible to devise the optimum level of an organization's contribution.

The delegation of Brazil believes that the Peacebuilding Commission established by the outcome document will greatly contribute to increased coordination among regional organizations and the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. We expect that the Commission will soon be operational and we are working determinedly with other delegations towards that end.

Regional organizations have the ability and flexibility to muster support for initiatives aimed at breaking vicious cycles of insecurity and violence that plague so many countries all over the world. In areas such as the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons they can and do make a difference. They are also key players when it comes to involving civil society, which quite often plays a major role in peacebuilding as they possess the essential understanding of domestic dynamics.

Brazil is acutely aware that no peace can be expected to last if the people concerned cannot live a dignified life. In that sense, the most relevant contribution we can make is fostering development and combating hunger and poverty, those infamous seedbeds of conflict.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the United Nations bears the primary responsibility among international organizations to promote peace and security, foster development and guarantee respect for human rights. Those are the main pillars of our collective endeavours. Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations will make our own tasks easier and our efforts more efficient, thus strongly increasing the likelihood that the Charter responsibilities of the Security Council will be effectively met.

Finally, I would like to thank the Romanian delegation for the draft resolution proposed on this issue, which my delegation is prepared to support.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Brazil for the kind words he addressed to me and to my Minister.

**Mr. Baja** (Philippines): We are honoured by the presence of the Foreign Minister of Romania to preside over this important meeting. We congratulate the Romanian mission, led by your dynamic self, Mr. President, on its initiative in developing the theme of our debate. We are also grateful to the representatives of regional organizations, whose presentations enrich our insight into cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security.

At this stage of our discussion, the importance and usefulness of cooperation between the United Nations — in particular the Security Council — and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security has been sufficiently acknowledged. The United Nations and regional organizations are, and should be, mutually reinforcing partners in that endeavour. The challenge before us is to look for opportunities to enhance that partnership and areas in which to do so.

There are some operational guidelines we must bear in mind here. The first obvious consideration is that no two regional organizations can be so similar as to admit of a uniform standard for cooperation or partnership. Regional organizations embody regional norms. The simplest way to understand a regional organization — thereby making cooperation more effective — is to study its charter or, in the absence of such a document, the instruments establishing the regional grouping. Regional organizations have emerged from particular regional developments, as reflected in the preambles of regional charters or instruments.

The second obvious consideration to bear in mind is that in most cases, a regional organization can be no more than the sum total of the political orientation, the level of economic development and the cultural and religious diversity of its members. Those are important factors in the equations affecting the competence of regional organizations and the degree to which they interact and cooperate with the United Nations, and particularly with the Security Council, as it carries out its mandate of maintaining international peace and security.

The search for appropriate modalities for cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations should aim to promote speedy and effective responses to situations likely to threaten regional or even international peace and security. Such modalities should optimize the resources of concerned regional organizations and of the various components of the United Nations system on the basis of their comparative strengths. That will ensure the complementarity of efforts and will eliminate duplication. This concept should hold true regardless of whether the cooperation or partnership is in the area of conflict prevention, peacekeeping or post-conflict peacebuilding.

There are fertile areas that the United Nations and regional organizations could cultivate in the maintenance of international peace and security. In the area of conflict prevention, the United Nations could stimulate the use of regional mechanisms or arrangements in the pacific settlement of disputes. Such stimulation could come in the form of confidence-building measures and technical assistance aimed at the capacity-building of such mechanisms. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia provides for a High Council, which is available to members for the settlement of disputes. The United Nations could also enhance its support for and assistance to regional seminars — for example, the United Nations-ASEAN Conference on Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in South-East Asia. The next such conference is scheduled to be held in the first half of 2006.

It is also relevant to mention that, as borne out by ASEAN's experience, a parallel track undertaken by the academic sector of civil society or by regional think tanks has been useful. The ASEAN Regional Forum — the regional process initiated by ASEAN to engage its dialogue partners and other interested parties in the Asia-Pacific region in confidence-building and cooperation activities on political and security matters — should attract the attention of the United Nations with regard to its conflict prevention efforts.

In the areas of peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, it is essential to establish a dedicated communication procedure for the exchange of relevant information. That would permit the identification of activities likely to disturb regional peace and would serve as a device for early warning and monitoring to prevent their escalation into hostilities. Such communication procedures or processes could also serve as a repertoire of best practices through which other regions could successfully address similar situations. That would also provide an opportunity to develop an integrated operational response aimed at a negotiated political settlement.

During the recent ASEAN-United Nations summit held on 13 September 2005, ASEAN leaders and the Secretary-General of the United Nations reviewed and discussed broad areas of cooperation, which included energy security, debt relief, health, disaster management and peace and security. In the area of peace and security, they committed themselves to enhancing cooperative efforts to combat international terrorism at the national, regional and international levels. It cannot be overemphasized that cooperation between the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, and regional organizations to combat a common enemy — terrorism — should be further enhanced.

The United Nations should also encourage dialogue and cooperation among regional organizations. ASEAN Foreign Ministers, for example, have consultations with their counterparts from other regional organizations — such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Rio Group — in the margins of the annual sessions of the General Assembly in New York.

Finally, Mr. President, we welcome and support the draft resolution formulated by your delegation, which would, among other things, request the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Security Council assessments of progress made in cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the Philippines for the very kind words he addressed to the presidency.

**Mr. De La Sablière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Romania for having once again taken the initiative to convene a debate on the subject we are considering today. Given the growing needs in the area of peacekeeping, regional organizations have an essential role to play in both taking over from and supporting United Nations activities.

I fully associate myself with the statement made earlier by Ambassador Jones Parry on behalf of the European Union. I wish only to make a few supplementary remarks.

Regional organizations have recently made significant progress in giving full effect to the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. I believe it is accurate to say that today, such organizations are often able to make a major contribution to peacekeeping at every stage and in all its dimensions, from conflict prevention to the rebuilding of a country emerging from crisis. We can see that clearly in our daily work in the Council: they intervene, sometimes, proactively, sometimes by taking over, and sometimes by supplementing United Nations activities. We also note that the capacities of various organizations are not identical and that progress is still needed. But major efforts are being undertaken everywhere, and they must be recognized and continued.

As Ambassador Jones Parry underlined, the European Union is actively strengthening its ability to support the crisis management activities of the United Nations. We can see the evidence of that in the Balkans. The European Union's actions now take place in the framework of the 24 September 2003 joint declaration of the United Nations and the European Union on cooperation in crisis management. The EU is also involved in strengthening the capacities of African regional and subregional organizations through the Peace Facility, which finances operations conducted by regional actors on the continent.

In that regard, I pay tribute to the initiatives that African countries have taken. Our Council, which devotes more than 50 per cent of its time to the management or the prevention of crises in Africa, is well aware of them. The African Union has been able to make a vital contribution to the transition process in Burundi, among other actions, while the Economic Community of West African States has taken action in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire.

It has often been seen that subregional organizations work in good harmony and cooperation with regional organizations and the Security Council and that we all arrive together — or at least try to — to make our actions complementary. Quite often, the actions of regional organizations have ensured a presence on the ground on occasions when the United Nations was not yet prepared to deploy a peacekeeping force. That is, in fact, what happened in Burundi. The Organization of American States has taken action in Haiti, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is continuing its work on the Eurasian continent.

We now regularly study the relations between the Security Council and regional organizations. I think that at each stage, we have to consider the nature of the value added by cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations. With respect to the difficult area of crisis and conflict prevention, I think that we are all aware that an effective regional organization often — more often than the United Nations — has the means to play an early-warning role.

That is what countries of the region are doing. We increasingly see that they tend to work through regional organizations or get them involved directly. That is a good thing, because it facilitates information and communication. I think it is necessary to have good information and communication going back and forth between the United Nations and regional organizations. My delegation welcomes the fact that progress has been made in that regard, but I think that we can do even better, as Article 54 of the Charter invites us to do.

I would add that a concrete step that prevention effort would be for the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations to take into account the instruments created by regional structures for marking and tracing small arms.

Beyond crisis prevention and management, regional organizations have a role to play in the stages of the political and economic reconstruction of a country emerging from a major crisis. In our work to establish a Peacebuilding Commission, I think it is right to give regional organizations a place in the Commission's consideration of a given situation. I think that the contributions of regional organizations on a case-by-case basis will be one of the conditions for the success of the Peacebuilding Commission and the new, ambitious vision it embodies of joint action among all actors seeking the resolution of a conflict.

We are working for, and are increasingly seeing, complementarity among the actions of regional organizations as they contribute on the ground through their presence in peacekeeping activities. We see more and more that regional organizations constitute one of

the options for peacekeeping capacities that the international community should have at its disposal in coming years. Some operations will be classic United Nations peacekeeping operations, and others might be regional actions authorized by the Security Council. Some, as was the case in Burundi, might precede a United Nations operation. Some will allow for a substantial, long-term deployment, while others might be emergency operations. For its part, the European Union is actively developing tactical units to fulfil such emergency operations functions.

We look forward to the observations in the report of the Secretary-General on consultations related to the conclusion of agreements establishing a framework for cooperation between the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and regional organizations, including the contribution of the regional organizations. I believe that it would be very useful for the draft resolution to be adopted to refer to that in the paragraph concerning the report of the Secretary-General.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm France's support for all those efforts, which should enable the Council, to which the Charter assigns the primary responsibility for international peace and security, to better involve regional actors in its mission, but also to thus strengthen the effectiveness of the peace efforts that are the foundation of the Organization and that bring us together today.

I simply wish to add that this effort for cooperation and coordination should take place especially in the field. Earlier I described situations where the United Nations took action on the ground alongside regional organizations and where they are able to take action in the same country. That coordination is not easy or automatic. I believe it requires an effort on the part of both the United Nations and regional organizations in order for that developing coordination on the ground to go as well as possible.

**The President:** I now call on the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

**Mr. Mahmassani** (*spoke in Arabic*): I am speaking on behalf of Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, in this debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of global peace and security. I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on presiding over the work of the Council for the month of October. We appreciate your effective and unique role and wish you every success. I would also like to thank the Foreign Minister and the delegation of the Philippines for their successful efforts last month.

This meeting is a follow-up to last month's summit of heads of State or Government, who expressed support for firmer relations between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The High-level Plenary Meeting of the Assembly also reaffirmed the importance of the participation of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council and stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and such organizations in all areas.

The Security Council, at the summit meeting held on 14 September, stressed the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the prevention of conflict and to establish effective partnerships between the Council and regional organizations in order to facilitate confronting conflicts and crises at an early stage. In a resolution, the Council also stressed its determination to strengthen the capacities of the United Nations in several areas through, inter alia, support for regional mediation initiatives, in close cooperation with regional organizations. The Council stressed the need to strengthen regional capacities for early warning and the creation of rapid reaction systems. Likewise, the Millennium Declaration also noted the need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in conformity with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Heads of State or Government also stressed that regional organizations can work in complementarity at the international and regional institutional levels for the achievement of international peace and security, given the regional organizations' knowledge of the region. This is an integral part of international peace and security.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Security Council on the one hand, and international organizations on the other, should be governed by the provisions of the Charter, and should include peacekeeping operations, general reform and development, all of which can contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. Chapter VIII also deals with aspects of coordination

and cooperation that are enshrined in many agreements between the United Nations and such organizations. Thus, there are many relationships based on cooperation that go beyond matters relating strictly to the maintenance of peace to other, broader concepts.

Over and above political considerations, there are many economic, social and human issues facing the international community today, including poverty, diseases, underdevelopment and terrorism, that require us to fine-tune Chapter VIII so as to enable regional organizations to face up to the challenges of the twenty-first century with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Given the new international order, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of international peace and security is an absolute necessity, because such organizations can be effective and helpful partners with the United Nations when dealing with questions pertaining to various regions of conflict in the world. That is why the Security Council must maintain stable and organized relations between itself and regional organizations and why such cooperation would be more effective. Here, I would like to highlight the tasks carried out by regional organizations and the practical role that they play in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations through the Security Council.

Article 52 of the Charter sets out the traditional role of regional organizations in the management of local conflicts. The Security Council must reactivate the role of such organizations and must be seriously attentive to their opinions and initiatives in the area of conflict management and conflict resolution. This would contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in an effective way.

The League of Arab States has taken several initiatives, in accordance with the purposes and principles set out in the Charter, with regard to the relationship between the Security Council and regional organizations with a view to the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the Middle East. In this context, I would like to refer to the Arab peace initiative launched at the Beirut summit in 2002. We had hoped that the Security Council would give serious consideration to that initiative to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and achieve peace in the region. Unfortunately, the Council has not made any sincere attempt to consider it to date, and we have therefore lost an opportunity to bring peace and security to the region. I would like to remind the Council that that initiative is still on the table.

The League of Arab States is currently working with the African Union and the United Nations with a view to bringing about peace in Darfur. The Secretary General of the League of Arab States is also in the process of preparing an initiative with regard to the Iraqi situation.

We must re-examine the relationship between the Security Council and regional organizations in order to consolidate it and to ensure that the Council is better informed of events in conflict areas, in addition to its mission in preventing such conflicts. The regional organizations must be invited to participate in activities, meetings and negotiations in the Security Council that relate to countries that are party to such organizations, with a view to strengthening their role in those conflict areas in which they are involved.

I would also like to underline the role that regional organizations play in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and in coordinating humanitarian assistance for those in need in areas of conflict, crises and natural disasters. We must also ensure that contacts are maintained between the President of the Security Council and the chairpersons of the regional organizations, particularly with regard to relevant items on the Council's agenda. We must also take the lead from the heads of such organizations with regard to drawing up strategies for implementing Security Council resolutions and any reforms that are under way. The strengthening of relations with regional organizations, for example, will enable such organizations to become active partners in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Maintaining international peace and security requires us to respect international relations and the principles of international law. Regional organizations must therefore be strengthened to enable them to make a contribution to conflict resolution and crises. That will enable the international community to establish an international democratic system of collective security.

**The President:** There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. In view of the lateness of the hour, and with the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now.

*The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.*